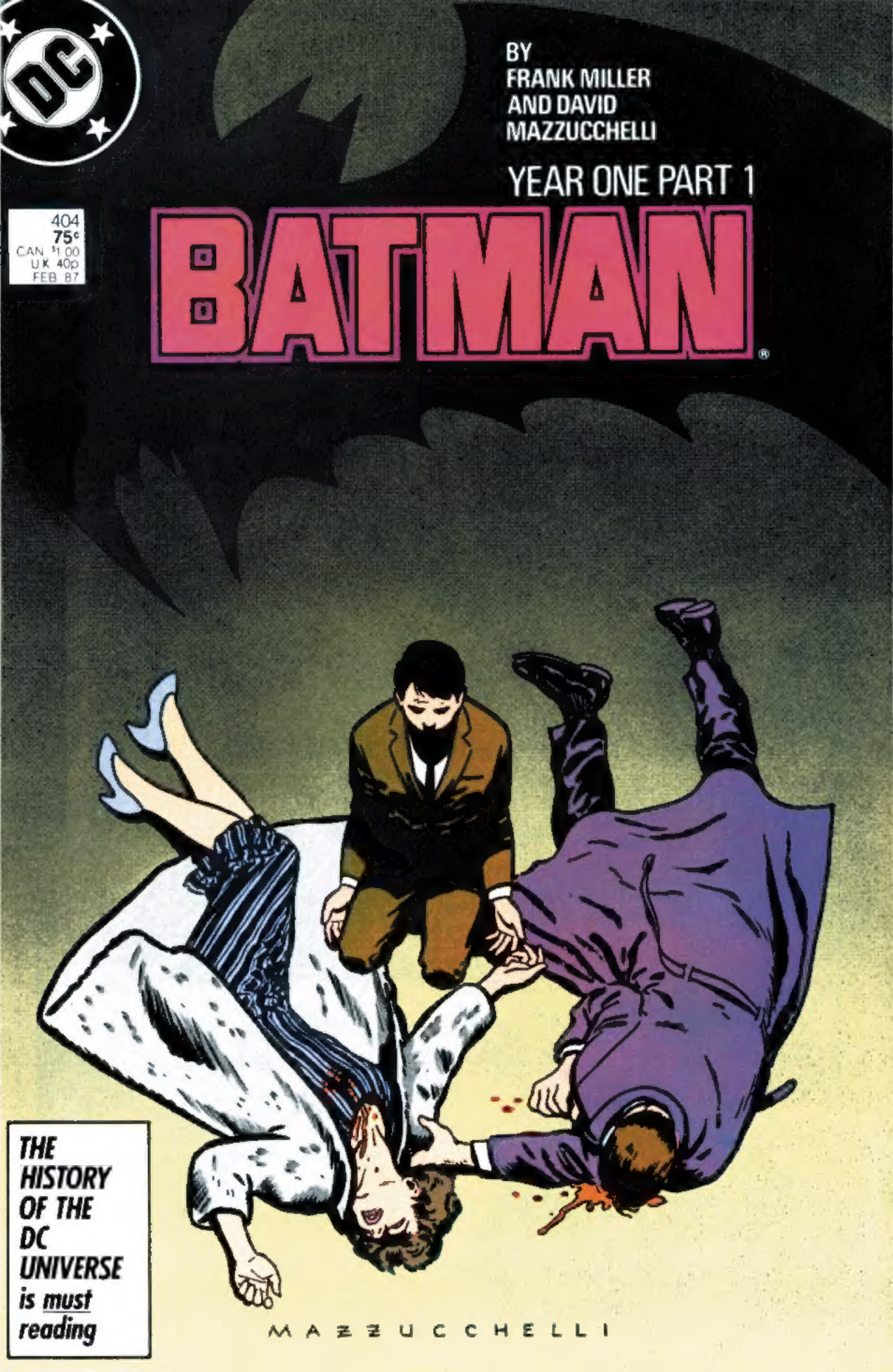
BY
FRANK MILLER
AND DAVID
MAZZUCCHELLI
YEAR ONE PART 1
BATMAN
404
75¢
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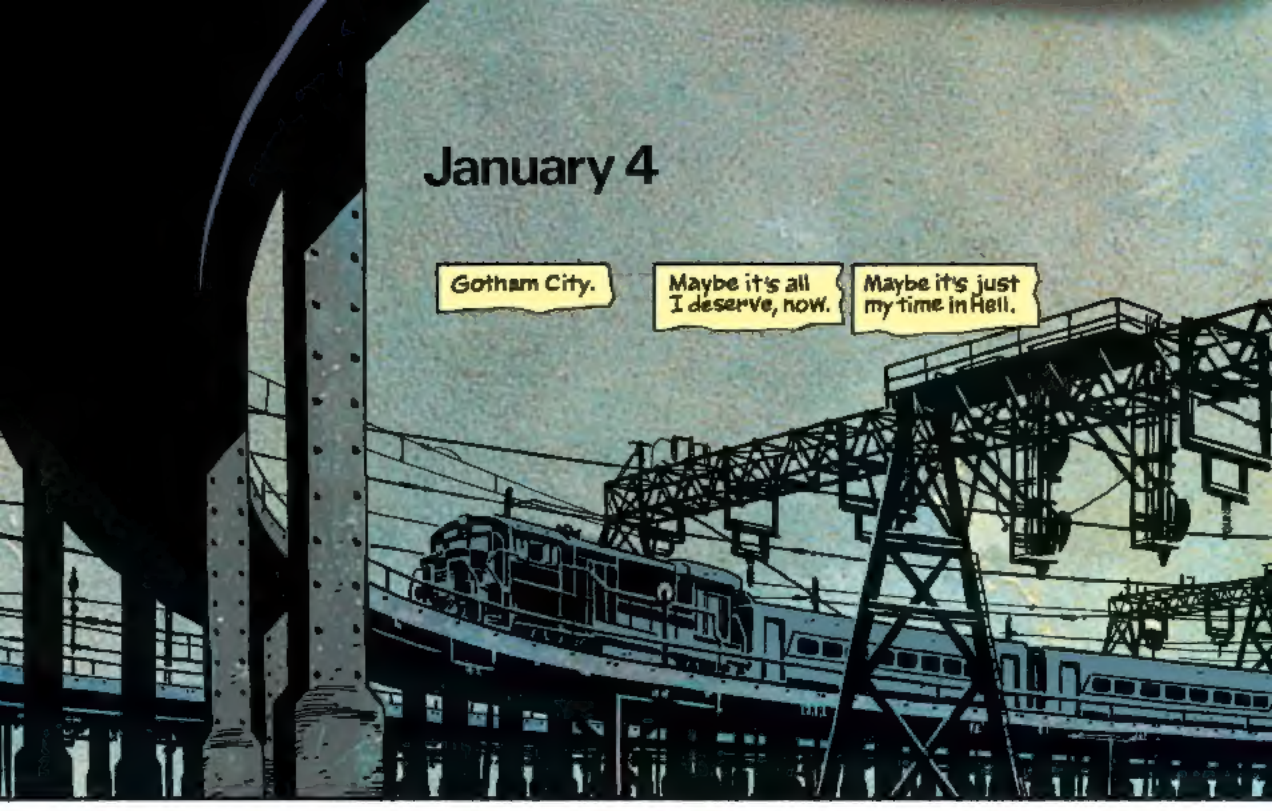
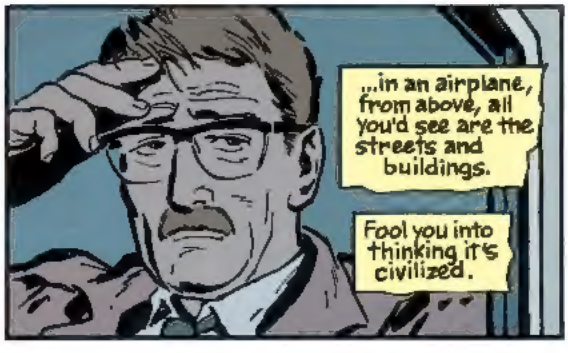
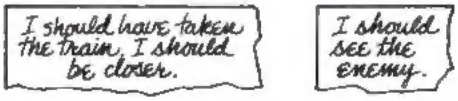
FEB 87
THE HISTORY OF THE DC UNIVERSE is must reading
MAZZUCCHELLI


January 4
Gotham City.
Maybe it's all I deserve, now.
Maybe it's just my time in Hell.

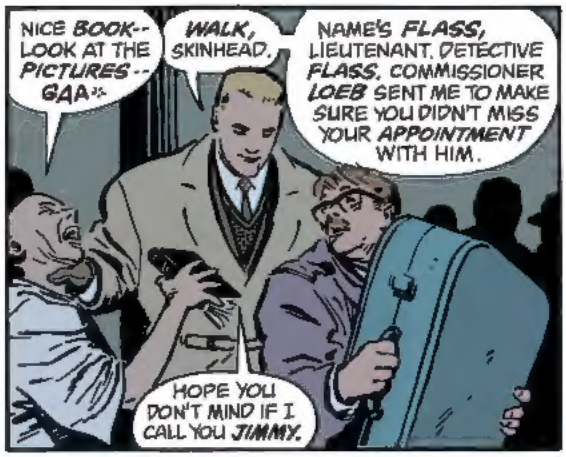
Twelve hours. My stomach's been trying to eat itself for the last five.
Barbara's flying in. I don't care how much it costs.
Train's no way to come to Gotham...


...in an airplane, from above, all you'd see are the streets and buildings.
Fool you into thinking it's civilized.

...BEGINNING OUR FINAL DESCENT TO GOTHAM CITY. PLEASE RETURN SEATS AND TRAYS TO THEIR UPRIGHT POSITIONS...
From here, it's clean shafts of concrete and snowy rooftops. The work of men who died generations ago.
From here, it looks like an achievement.


I should have taken the train, I should be closer.
I should see the enemy.

By now Barbara's gotten her tests back. I only hate myself a little for hoping they came out negative.
This is no place to raise a family.
NICE BOOK FOR A SMALL DONATION--
NO, PLEASE--
GORDON!
LIEUTENANT JAMES GORDON!


NICE BOOK-- LOOK AT THE PICTURES-- GAA--
WALK, SKINHEAD.
NAME'S FLASS, LIEUTENANT. DETECTIVE FLASS, COMMISSIONER LOEB SENT ME TO MAKE SURE YOU DIDN'T MISS YOUR APPOINTMENT WITH HIM.
HOPE YOU DON'T MIND IF I CALL YOU JIMMY.

WELL, I--
NICE =koff= COLORS...
WELCOME TO GOTHAM, JIMMY. IT'S NOT AS BAD AS IT LOOKS. ESPECIALLY IF YOU'RE A COP.
COPS GOT IT MADE IN GOTHAM.

--WELCOME HOME, MR. WAYNE--
--HOW'S IT FEEL TO BE BACK--
--PRINCESS CAROLINE--
--ANY TRUTH TO THE RUMORS--
--ANY PLANS, MR. WAYNE--
THE TWENTY-FIVE-YEAR-OLD HEIR TO THE WAYNE MILLIONS DECLINED TO COMMENT ON RUMORS OF ROMANCE IN HIS LIFE...
...OR ON HIS PLANS ON HIS RETURN TO GOTHAM AFTER TWELVE YEARS ABROAD. WE'LL KEEP YOU POSTED ON GOTHAM'S RICHEST--AND BEST LOOKING--NATIVE SON, TOM?

THANK YOU, JACKIE. FOLLOWING THE *DISAPPEARANCE* OF A KEY *WITNESS*, ASSISTANT DISTRICT ATTORNEY *HARVEY DENT* HAS WITHDRAWN *CONSPIRACY* CHARGES AGAINST POLICE *COMMISSIONER LOEB*...

YOU KNOW WE'RE ALL *DELIGHTED* TO HAVE YOU ON THE *TEAM*, LIEUTENANT.

GILLIAN B. LOEB
COMMISSIONER OF POLICE

YOU'LL GET MY BEST WORK, SIR. I PROMISE.

AND WE ARE A *TEAM*. A *TEAM* NEEDS *TEAM SPIRIT*, DON'T YOU THINK?

YES IT DOES. AND YOUR *RECORD* SHOWS YOU'VE *GOT* WHAT IT *TAKES*.

I KNOW I'VE MADE MY *MISTAKES*, SIR. I'M *GRATEFUL* FOR THIS CHANCE TO *PROVE* MYSELF...

IF THERE'S ONE THING I CAN'T *STAND*, IT'S *SMOKING*.

WHAT *MISTAKES* HAVE *YOU* MADE, LIEUTENANT? YOU KEPT THE *MEDIA* AWAY FROM IT. THAT'S THE *BOTTOM LINE*, ISN'T IT?

YES IT IS.

I'd feel better about toughing out the nicotine fit...

...if I didn't have to smell those Eucalyptus Cough Drops of his...

I *SWEAR* YOU WON'T HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT MY *HONESTY*, COMMISSIONER.

LAST THING ON MY MIND. *LAST* THING.

Wayne Manor.

Built as a fortress, generations past, to protect a fading line of royalty from an age of Equals.

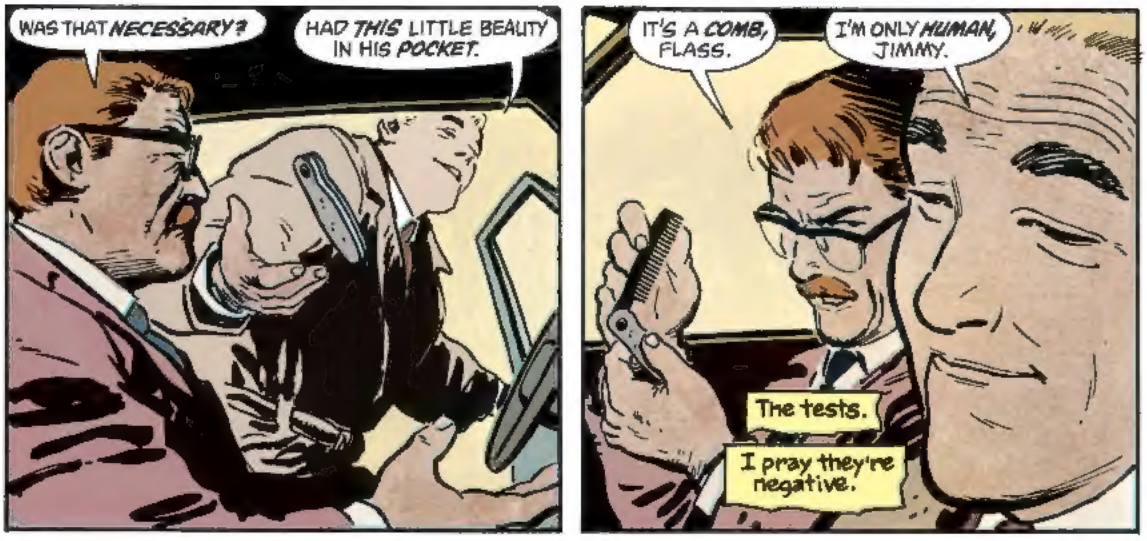
ALFRED.

I TRUST YOU'VE BEEN *WELL*, MASTER BRUCE.

Mother. Father.

It's good to be back.

KNEW YOU'D LIKE THE COMMISSIONER, JIMMY.
AND HE'LL BE JUST AS GOOD TO YOU AS YOU ARE TO HIM, YOU CAN COUNT ON THAT...
I keep telling myself it's either this or pumping gas...
...then I tell myself I'm doing it for Barbara...
SCREEECHH
FLASS-- WHAT'S--
NOTHING I CAN'T HANDLE SOLO, JIMMY.
MOTHER KNOW YOU'RE HERE, STEVIE?
OH, MAN...
...NOT DOING ANYTH--
WHUKK
I keep talking to myself. This time I say you'd better know your facts before you bring another cop down.
Especially in public.
Flass has had Green Beret training. I can tell. And he knows how to use his size.
I watch and I don't do a damn thing and I memorize every move.
For future reference.


WAS THAT NECESSARY?
HAD THIS LITTLE BEAUTY IN HIS POCKET.
IT'S A COMB, FLASS.
I'M ONLY HUMAN, JIMMY.
The tests.
I pray they're negative.

February 12
THE BOYS-- THEY'VE BEEN ASKING ME TO TALK TO YOU, JIMMY. THOUGHT MAYBE I COULD GET A WORD IN, KNOWING HOW TIGHT WE ARE.
THEY'RE WORRIED ABOUT YOU.
I'M TOUCHED, FLASS. BUT RIGHT NOW I'M WORRIED--ABOUT A HOMICIDE. TURN LEFT.

NEVER MAKE IT IN THIS BUSINESS IF YOU DON'T LEARN TO RELAX, JIMMY. I MEAN, WE'VE GOT OUR OWN WAY OF DOING THINGS, HERE IN GOTHAM.
I MEAN, YOU CAME DOWN PRETTY HARD ON MORGAN...
I MEAN, YOU WITH A BABY ON THE WAY...
CALL ME LIEUTENANT. MAKE YOUR NEXT RIGHT.

February 21
I'm not ready.
I have the means, the skill--but not the method...
...no. That's not true. I have hundreds of methods.
But something's missing. Something isn't right.
I have to wait.
I have to wait.
February 26
...SO FATHER DONELLEY, HE SLIPS GORDON A FIFTY WITH THE HANDSHAKE...
GILLIAN B. I
COMMISSIONE
OF POLICE
...AND GORDON, HE LOOKS AT IT LIKE HIS HAND'S GOT A DISEASE. THEN HE THROWS THE FIFTY IN THE PADRE'S FACE.
GIVES THE SQUAD A TWO-HOUR LECTURE. PUTS SCHELL ON PROBATION.
HE'S JUST NOT FITTING IN, GILL.
I HAD SUCH HOPES FOR THAT BOY...
I COULD GET THE BOYS TOGETHER--SOFTEN HIM UP.
NO. NOT WHILE I'M IN TOWN. THERE'S ENOUGH HEAT ON ME AS IT IS.
NO. YOU'LL ABSOLUTELY HAVE TO WAIT UNTIL I'M AT THE CONFERENCE IN WASHINGTON...TWO WEEKS, FLASS...

March 11
The engine hums, gently, not quite convinced it should stop.
Everything is in place. The attendant was even obliging enough to ask me for my autograph. My alibi is set.
Bruce Wayne has been sighted at the same hotel as a visiting Hollywood sex queen. That should generate sufficient rumors--
--to account for my whereabouts for the next few hours.
5
5
This is a reconnaissance mission. Until I know more, I must avoid combat. Until I'm ready...
...my anonymity is an obvious priority. The murder of my parents is a matter of public record.
All it requires is a change in clothing and complexion--
--and a single, memorable, distracting detail.
Requested off this night shift four times now-- damn it, Barbara needs me at night these days, Barbara, and little James...
...so I hope it's a boy. So what.
Four times and no reply. I'm not making friends in the department--
GOING TO WORK, LIEUTENANT?
GOING TO BE LATE.
MAY HAVE TO SKIP THE WHOLE NIGHT.

Old trick--talking to distract me--
--guarantees an attack from behind--
--should've checked my military record--
--I was taught to handle worse than this--
--but then--
--it's been a while--
Somewhere in the middle of it they tell me it's just a warning.
They remind me that I've got a pregnant wife.
Toward the end I hear a familiar chuckle.
Flass.

It's a twenty block walk to the enemy camp.
It's been educational. I was sized up like a piece of meat by the leather boys in Robinson Park. I waded through pleas and half hearted threats from junkies at the Finger Memorial. I stepped across a field of human rubble that lay sleeping in front of the overcrowded Sprang Mission.
Finally the worst of it.
The East End.
HOTEL EDWARDS
HOTEL EDWARDS
ADULTS ONLY
TOPLESS
VIDEOS
SHOP
XXX WATER
HOT N SEXY
WILD

Hard to believe it's gotten worse.
XXX
ALL NIG
SEXY GIRLS
DEEP SHOW
ACTION
WILD WILD!!!
BURLE
BIG TRIPLE FEATU
1 ALL NIGHT LO
2 SENSUOUS SU
3 EROTIC WONE
CHEER YOU UP.
TOPLESS
GIRL
MORE XXX

I DOUBT IT. HOW OLD ARE YOU?
YOUNG AS YOU WANT ME TO BE.
STUPID B-- THAS ALL WRONG, HOLLY. YOU DOIN' IT WRONG.

DID WHAT YOU SAID. JUST LIKE--
THAS RIGHT, HONEY. BUT YOU GOT TO PICK YOU TYPES. GOT TO KNOW WHICH ONES WANT WHAT YOU GOT.
THIS ONE'S NOT--
I HAVEN'T SAID, HAVE I?

THAT VICE I SMELL?
THAT CRAZY VET BIT-- THAS OLD, MAN.
I'M NOT THE POLICE.
BELIEVE ME

YOU STILL HERE? TOLD YOU TO GO, HOLLY.
HE HADN'T SAID.
WE TALK THIS OVER LATER, SWEET CHUNKS.
NO...
...I THINK YOU'RE FINISHED WITH HER.
I'm provoking him.
I really shouldn't
MAN, YOU PUSHIN YOU ON THE EDGE.
YOU LOOKIN' FOR A NEW SCAR. THAS RIGHT. JUS TELL ME WHERE, MAN...
OH. GEEZ... CAN'T BE VICE. WE'RE PAID UP. JUST SOME IDIOT OUT TO GET HIMSELF KILLED.
SELINA DON'T STOP NOW...
SHUT UP, SKUNK.
YOU KNOW WHAT I HATE MOST ABOUT MEN, SKUNK?
PLEASE, SELINA.. TELL ME . WHY YOU HATE US SO .. OH, PLEASE...
NEVER MET ONE.
SAY IT AGAIN...
His eyes keep flicking away from the girls to me. He turns away for a second--
--a dead giveaway--
hes pretty fast..

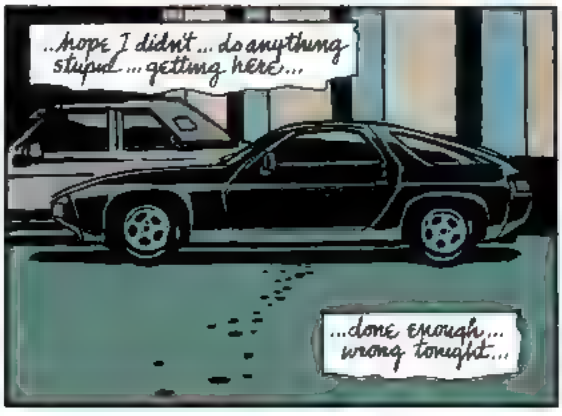
--I won't say he has a chance--
--but he's fast.
This is getting a little too good to me--better wrap it up--
XXX ALL NIGHT TOPLESS
GIRLS GIRLS GIRLS !!!
I dint--never should have done this--
--have to get out of here before I draw attention--
AAAA
COME ON YOU GUYS-- I GOT HIM--
Very good, Bruce
You've really put the fear of God into them
DAMN IT--

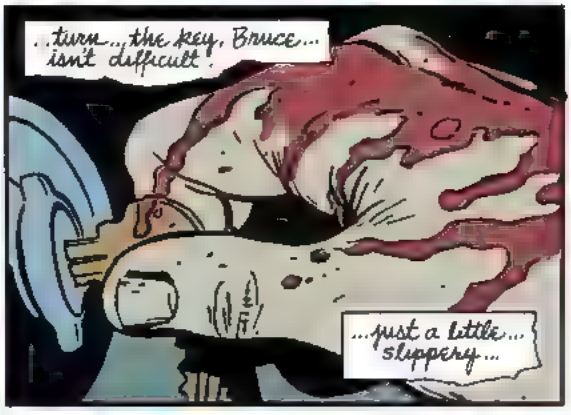
NOBODY HURTS HOLLY--
HURTS. BET HE BROKE MY WRIST--
Mess--made a mess of it--
--no excuse--didn't control myself--
--another one--hissing like a cat--
Looks like she knows what she's doing--be careful--
--that's good--she's had Karate training--
--but only Karate--
EEEEEEEE
--oh, no--
EEEE SKREEECHH
FREEZE--
SELINA GET UP--SELINA--
--if I'm caught--it's over--

KBLAM!!!!
HEY--HE DIDN'T MOVE, MAN
HE WAS GOING TO.
--hit an artery-- losing blood--
get us-- before they--
NEEDS A DOCTOR
MAYBE AFTER HE'S BOOKED
NNGG
--no-- can't let them--
can't
ANY CASH?
COUPLE BUCKS. NO I.D.
LOOK, MAN--
--HE'S BLEEDING ALL OVER THE SEAT. WE GOT TO TAKE HIM TO THE HOSPITAL.
YOU LOOK, BOY. I'VE RUN IN A THOUSAND LIKE HIM. DRIFTERS WHO NEEDS THEM.
IF HE DIES, HE--
YOU TWO
STOP THE CAR. GET OUT
WHAT THE HELL...
DON'T MIND HIM, BOY. PROBABLY HOPPED UP ON SOMETHING FAST, Y'KNOW?
I WARNED YOU
OH MY GOD-- HE--
CHINKK

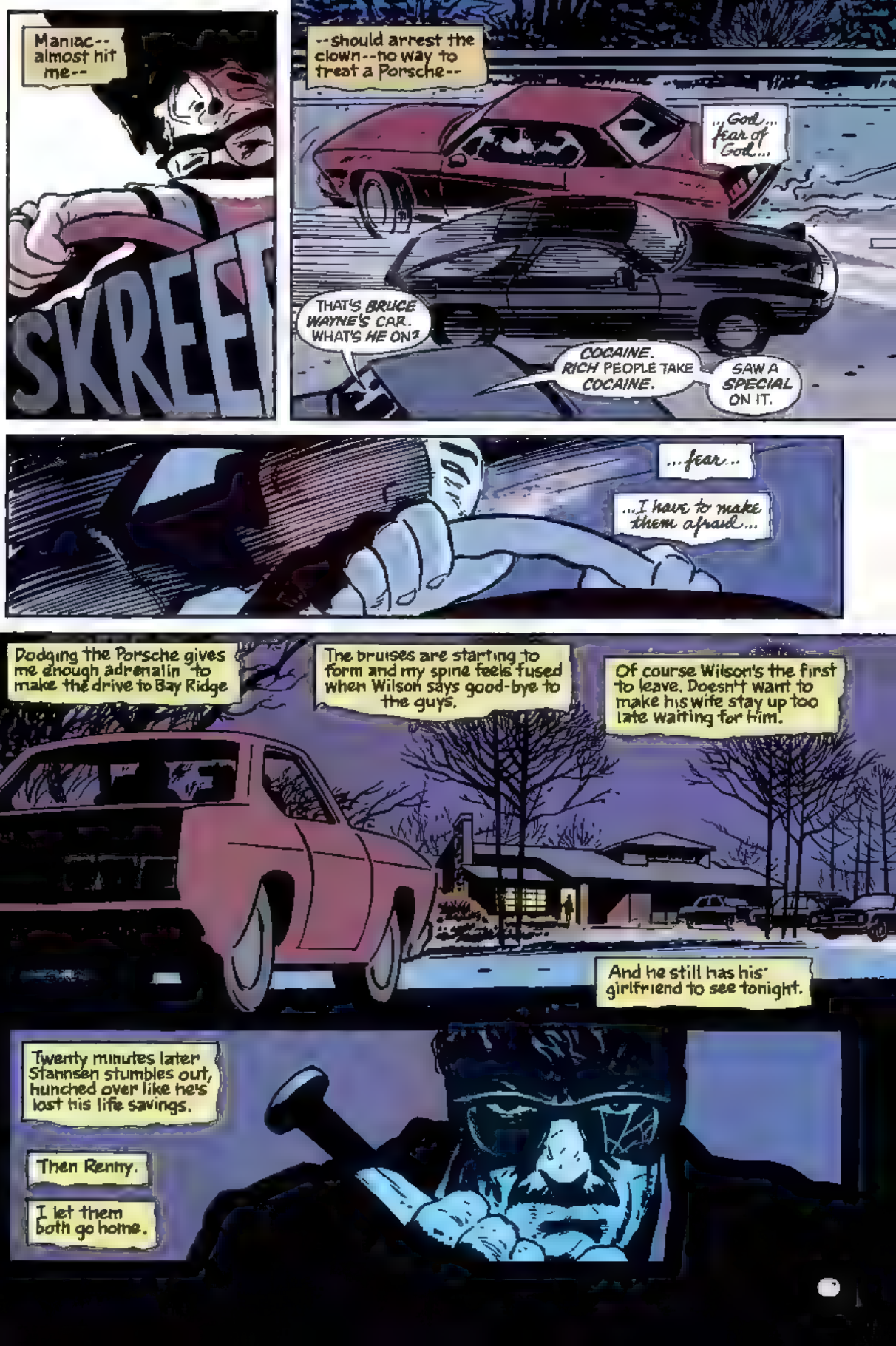
WHOKK
SKREEEEEEE
NO -- LET GO--
NNNNNN
Fire--only take seconds to reach the gas tank--
Sirens--more police--
--tank will go before they get here--!
--these men--they probably have families--

SMOKE FROM THE BLAZING POLICE CRUISER CAN BE SEEN FOR BLOCKS-- THE TWO OFFICERS WERE FOUND UNCONSCIOUS, THIRTY FEET AWAY...



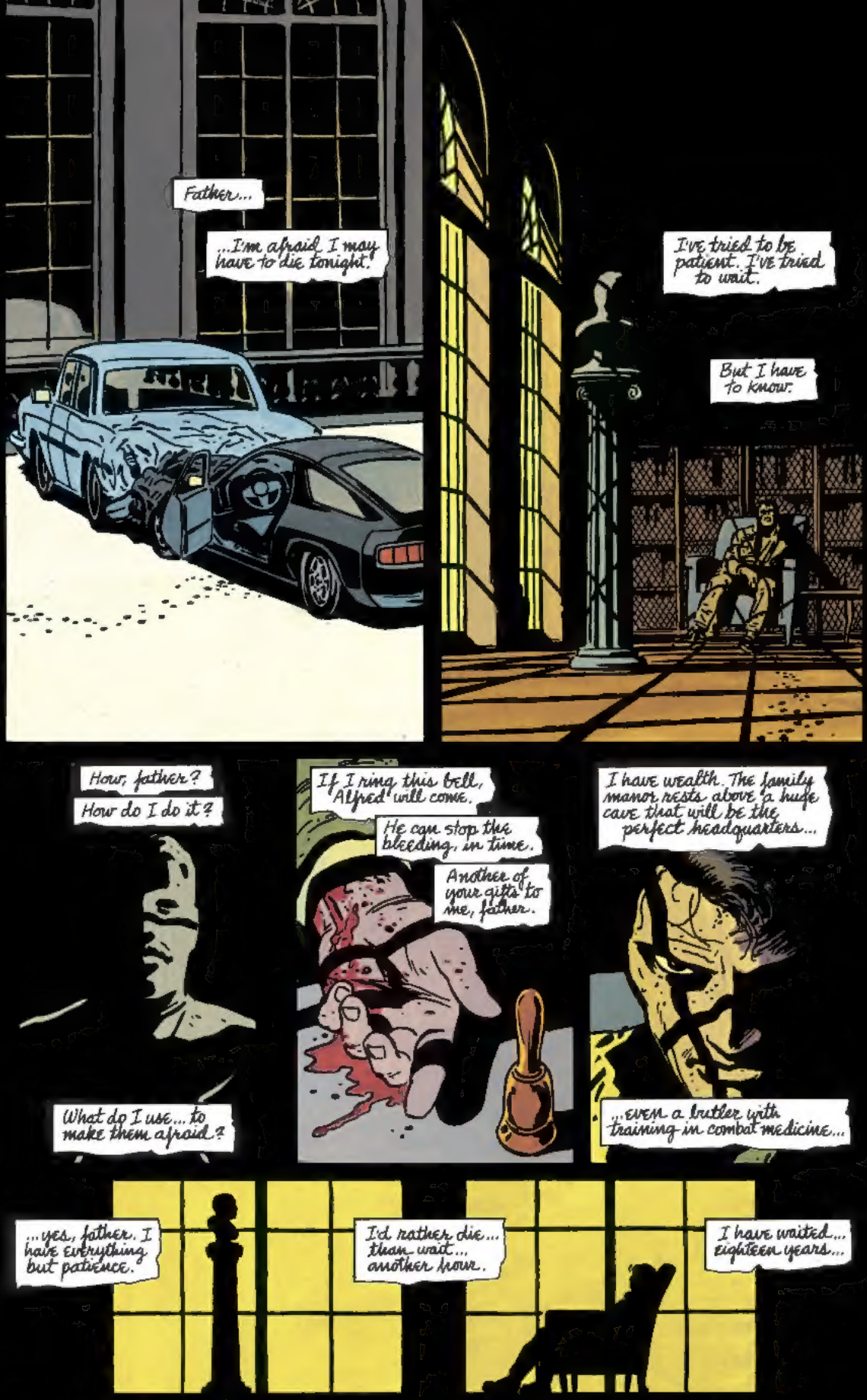


They did just enough to keep me out of the hospital...
...can't let Barbara see me like this...
DETECTIVE FLASS? HE'S OFF DUTY, LIEUTENANT. PROBABLY AT THE POKER PARTY OVER AT CHUTE'S.
WITH THE GUYS.

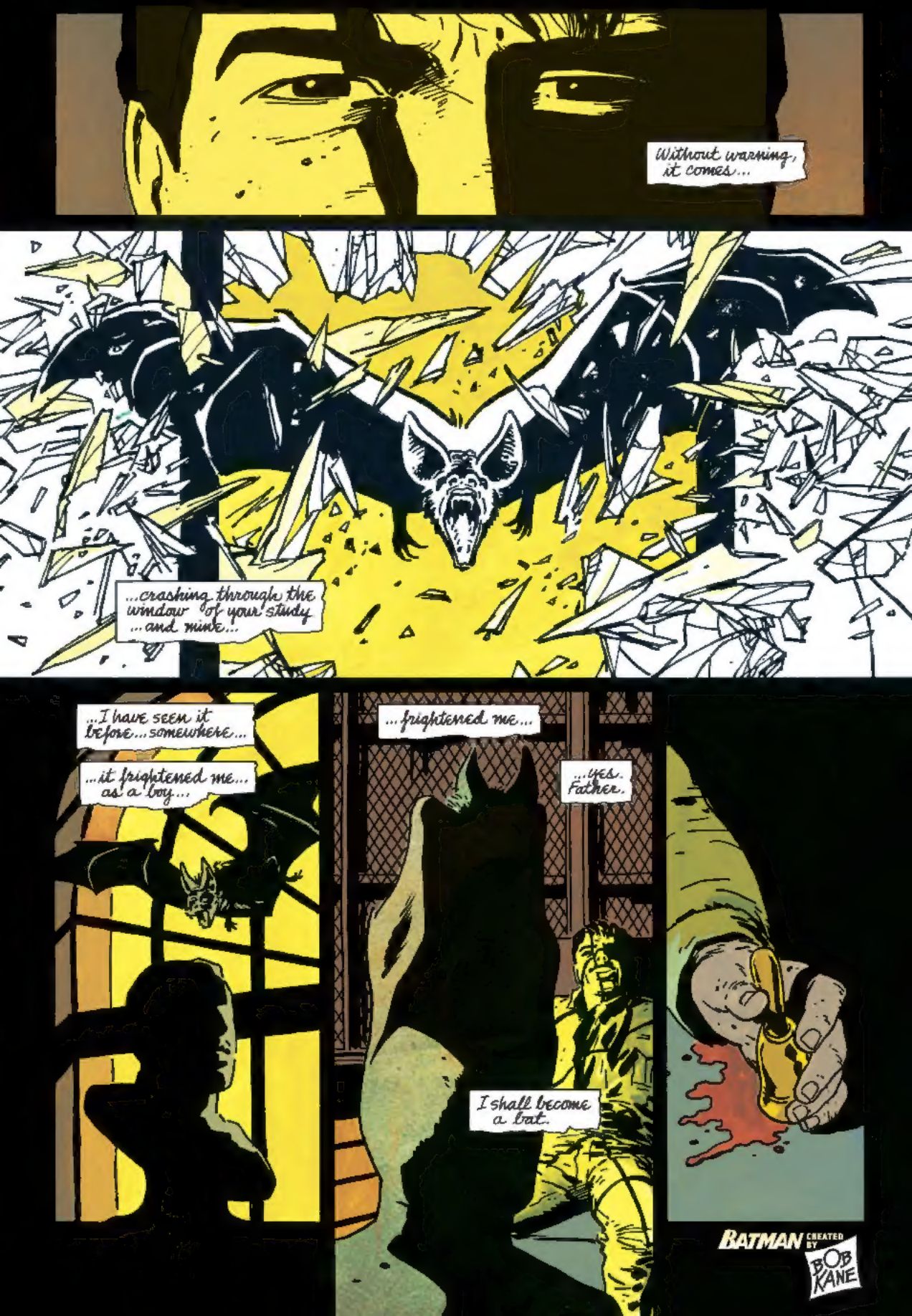

Maniac-- almost hit me--
SKREEE
--should arrest the clown--no way to treat a Porsche--
...God... fear of God...
THAT'S BRUCE WAYNE'S CAR. WHAT'S HE ON?
COCAINE. RICH PEOPLE TAKE COCAINE.
SAW A SPECIAL ON IT.
...fear...
...I have to make them afraid...
Dodging the Porsche gives me enough adrenalin to make the drive to Bay Ridge
The bruises are starting to form and my spine feels fused when Wilson says good-bye to the guys.
Of course Wilson's the first to leave. Doesn't want to make his wife stay up too late waiting for him.
And he still has his girlfriend to see tonight.
Twenty minutes later Stannsen stumbles out, hunched over like he's lost his life savings.
Then Renny.
I let them both go home.

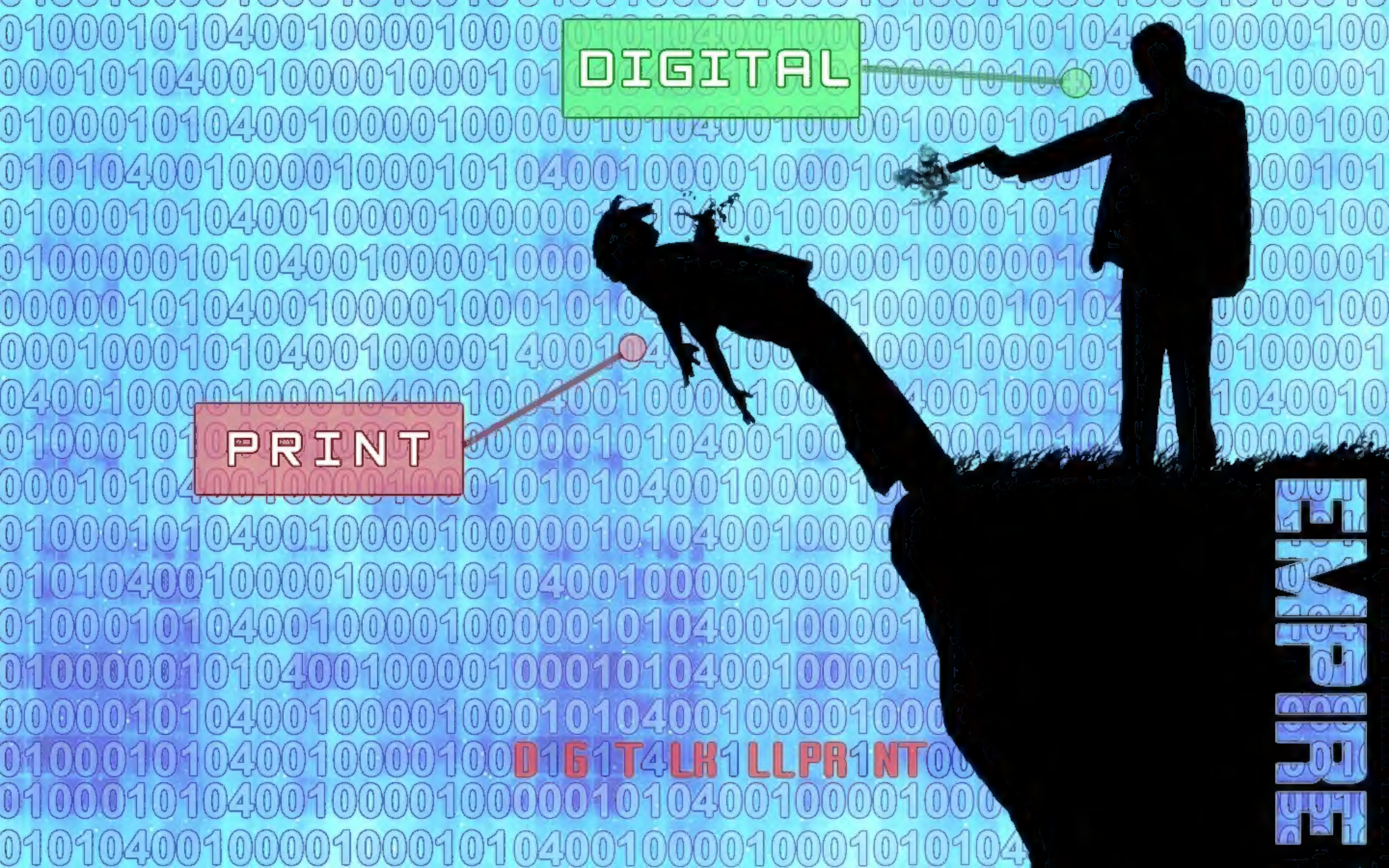
Finally.
Flass.
He staggers to his station wagon and gets in. It only takes him two tries.
I hear his engine start and watch him pull out. He almost flattens the mailbox before he remembers to turn his lights on.
I keep mine off and follow.
I haven't seen a house in three minutes when I pull up beside him and jerk the wheel.
He's ten miles over the speed limit.
Not fast enough to kill him when he hits the tree.
I show him my gun. He says my name and drops his.
He's big.
Green Beret training
It's been fifteen years since I had to take out a Green Beret.
Even so--
--he deserves a handicap.

I don't crack his skull.
GOTHAM HIGH
I don't crush his larynx.
I don't break his ribs or punch my hand through his chest
I do just enough --
--to keep him out of the hospital.
I toss his gun into the woods. It should be rusty by morning.
I take his clothes off and leave him in his own cuffs by the side of the road.
He'll never report it. Not Flass. He'll make up some story that involves at least ten attackers and never admit I did it.
But he'll know. And he'll stay away from Barbara.
Thanks, Flass.
You've shown me what it takes to be a cop in Gotham City.


Father...
...I'm afraid I may have to die tonight.
I've tried to be patient. I've tried to wait.
But I have to know.
How, father?
How do I do it?
If I ring this bell, Alfred will come.
He can stop the bleeding, in time.
Another of your gifts to me, father.
I have wealth. The family manor rests above a huge cave that will be the perfect headquarters...
What do I use... to make them afraid?
...even a butler with training in combat medicine...
...yes, father. I have everything but patience.
I'd rather die... than wait... another hour.
I have waited... eighteen years...

...eighteen years ... since...
...since Zorro:
The Mark of Zorro:
Since the walk. That night.
And the man with frightened, hollow eyes and a voice like glass being crushed...
...since all sense left my life.


Without warning, it comes...
...crashing through the window of your study ...and mine...
...I have seen it before...somewhere...
...it frightened me... as a boy...
...frightened me...
...Yes, Father.
I shall become a bat.
BATMAN CREATED BY BOB KANE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